ONTARIO PARKS

Balsam Lake

Terms of Reference

Ontario

Additional copies of this document may be obtained from
http://www.ontarioparks.com/english/invit.html

or from the following locations:

Ontario Parks, Central Zone
451 Arrowhead Park Rd. RR#2
Huntsville, Ontario, P1H 2J4
Tel.: (705) 789-4524

Park Superintendent
Balsam Lake Provincial Park
RR#1, Hwy 48
Kirkfield, Ontario, K0M 2B0
Tel.: (705) 454-3324

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Approval Statement

I am pleased to approve the Terms of Reference for the preparation of a park management plan for Balsam Lake Provincial Park (Recreation Class). These terms of reference meet all requirements as set out in the *Ontario Provincial Park Management Planning Manual*. They will effectively guide the park planning process through to the completion of the approved park management plan.

Adair Ireland-Smith
Director
Ontario Parks

Mar 23/08
Date

TERMS OF REFERENCE
Balsam Lake Provincial Park (Recreation Class)
Park Management Planning Process

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of the terms of reference is to:

- Explain the rationale for initiating a management plan for Balsam Lake Provincial Park (Recreation Class);
- Outline a proposed planning approach for the preparation of the plan; and
- Identify the staff and other resources required for the planning process.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- Balsam Lake Provincial Park is located on the northwest shore of Balsam Lake, in the geographic Township of Bexley, City of Kawartha Lakes (formerly Victoria County) (Figure 1). The park is approximately 45 km northwest of Lindsay and approximately 142 km north of metro Toronto. Balsam Lake Provincial Park is 449 ha in size and was regulated in 1968 (O. Reg. 320/68). The park boundaries are described in ONTARIO REGULATION 316/07 TABLE 1 Balsam Lake Provincial Park Schedule 69, Appendix B (Figure 2). Balsam Lake is managed as a recreation class park under a management plan written in 1985.

- The park offers recreation activities such as swimming, boating, fishing, camping, picnicking, wildlife viewing, hiking, and cross-country skiing. There are 505 developed campsites, mainly in the eastern third of the park. Balsam Lake is one of the most popular parks in Ontario; in 2006, 173,930 people visited the park.

- Balsam Lake Provincial Park is in Ecodistrict 6E-9, on the thinly-mantled limestone Carden Plain Physiographic Region. Natural heritage values at the park include kame moraine[1], esker[2], and limestone plain landforms. These physiographic features give rise to a broad array of ecological conditions and associated vegetation types. Balsam Lake protects 29 ecosites and 38 ecotypes. In total, 352 native and 89 introduced vascular plant[3] taxa[4] have been documented in the park. An additional 16 mammal, 73 breeding bird, six reptile, and five amphibian species have also been recorded within the park. Of special note is a population of butternut (Juglans cinerea), an endangered species, as well as special concern species such as red-headed woodpecker (Melanerpes erythrocephalus), eastern ribbonsnake (Thamnophis sauritus), and monarch butterfly (Danaus plexippus).

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[1] Kame moraine: Mounds of poorly sorted sand and gravel deposited by glacial meltwater in depressions on the glacier surface or at its margin.
[2] Esker: A serpentine ridge of sand and gravel. They mark channels in a melting glacier through which streams washed out much finer material, leaving the coarser gravels and sand between ice walls.
[3] Vascular Plant: Plants with woody conducting tissue which conveys sap, etc.
[4] Taxa: Pertaining to the classification of organisms into systems of relationship based on genetic and morphological similarities.

- The property on which the park is located was purchased in 1818 by the Government of Upper Canada from the Mississauga First Nation. Abundant forest resources and water power stimulated the development of a lumbering industry in the surrounding area. During 1850 to 1880, the original white pine forest was logged and, once cleared, land was given by the Crown to incoming settlers for cattle pasture and farming. In 1870, the land was acquired by George Laidlaw and remained with the Laidlaw family until the early 1960s when it was purchased by the province to be used as a provincial park.

The Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act and Ontario Parks' policy requires that management direction be prepared for all provincial parks. The objective is to develop a management plan commencing in Spring, 2008. A park management plan will define the protected area's goal, objectives and long-term direction for the protection, development, management and use of its natural values. The plan will also address such issues as permitted activities, site restoration and resource management.

The primary role of this planning process will be to identify the contributions that Balsam Lake makes to the achievement of the four Ontario Provincial Parks system objectives, which are:

1. To permanently protect representative ecosystems, biodiversity and provincially significant elements of Ontario's natural and cultural heritage and to manage these areas to ensure that ecological integrity is maintained.
2. To provide opportunities for ecologically sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities and encourage associated economic benefits.
3. To provide opportunities for Ontario residents and visitors to increase their knowledge and appreciation of Ontario's natural and cultural heritage.
4. To facilitate scientific research and to provide points of reference to support monitoring of ecological change on the broader landscape.

In addition, the planning process will identify and establish management policies aimed at maintaining or enhancing those contributions. Various reports, supporting documents, unpublished data and other relevant information will be made available for public review, at various stages of the planning process (as discussed in Section 6.0), during the development of the park management plan.

Based on its availability of outdoor recreation opportunities, Balsam Lake is protected and regulated under the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act and is managed as a recreational class provincial park.

FIGURE 1 **REGIONAL CONTEXT**

ONTARIO PARKS

Balsam Lake

FIGURE 1 **REGIONAL CONTEXT**

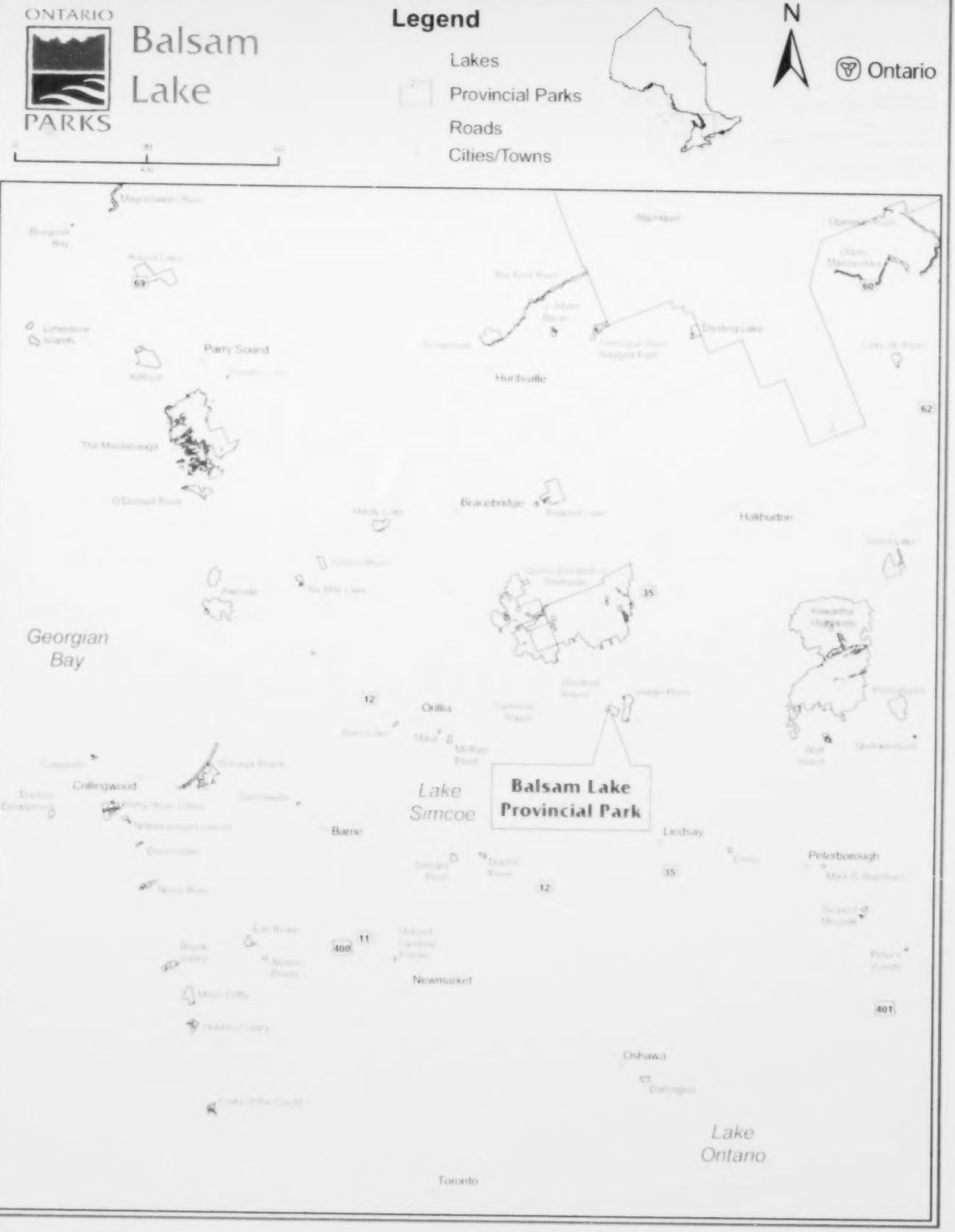
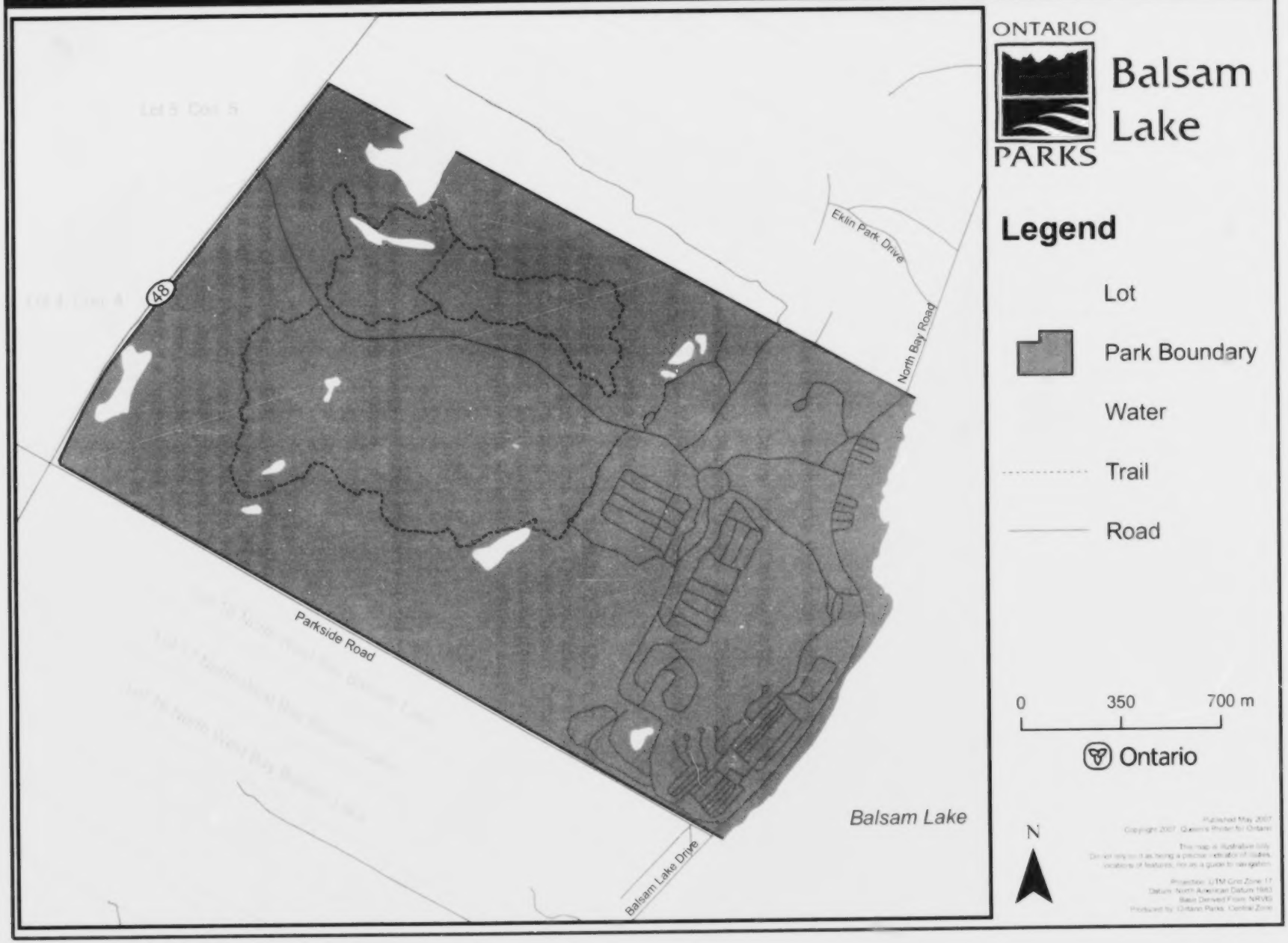


FIGURE 2

PARK BOUNDARY



3.0 PLANNING AREA

The planning area will include the entire 449 hectare property. Park management plans apply only to the area within the regulated boundary of the park. Within the park boundary, the protection objective will be achieved through appropriate zoning, control of land use and activities, and education. Ecological processes will be monitored. Appropriate mitigation of potential impacts will ensure continued protection of significant features. Park management plans may consider potential effects that activities occurring on adjacent areas may have on park values and features however the provisions of the plan are limited to the regulated area. Park management plans may also consider the effects of park activities on adjacent land and water uses.

4.0 PLANNING TEAM

The planning team will consist of:

- Jeff Lytle, Acting Park Superintendent, Balsam Lake Provincial Park (chair and technical support);
- Hank van Luit, Park Planning Manager, Central Zone, Ontario Parks, Huntsville (planning advisor);
- Meghan Pomeroy, Acting Assistant Park Planner, Central Zone, Ontario Parks, Huntsville (planning support);
- Katie Griffiths, District Planner, Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) Peterborough District; and
- Emmet Yeo, Councilor, City of Kawartha Lakes.

Ex officio members of the planning team will be Jay Nichols, Zone Manager, Central Zone, Ontario Parks, Burke Korol, Zone Ecologist, Central Zone, Ontario Parks, and Dan Paleczny, Senior Policy and Planning Coordinator, Planning and Research Section, Ontario Parks. The planning team may consult externally with academics, knowledgeable stakeholders, the Aboriginal community and others as required for scientific and technical expertise.

5.0 INTEGRATION

Integration of the various resource management and stewardship interests will be addressed at appropriate stages during the planning process.

Internal Integration

- The draft terms of reference, preliminary park management plan and recommended park management plan will be circulated for review to Ontario Parks, MNR (i.e., *Peterborough* District and *Southern* Region) prior to approval by the Director, Ontario Parks;
- At the preliminary plan stage, MNR programs may be consulted regarding significant resource values within the protected area and environs, management options which could be considered within the existing park policy framework, consistency of proposed protected area polices with policy direction for other MNR programs;

- If mutually desirable, a meeting regarding the planning process, issues, options, etc., could be held with Ontario Parks, District and/or Regional staff;
- Staff from other Ministry programs may be asked to serve as resource contacts during the public consultation phase of the planning process; and
- Advance copies of all communications products will be shared with the local MNR communications/information officer prior to Ontario Parks' approval.

External Integration

- Park management planning materials will be distributed in order to meet public consultation requirements associated with the *Environmental Assessment Act* and the *Environmental Bill of Rights* (EBR), taking direction from Ontario Parks Bulletin PM 11.02.02 (currently under review) and the Ontario Provincial Parks Management Planning Manual;
- The appropriate Aboriginal communities will be consulted in advance of each stage of the planning process;
- Meetings may be held with stakeholders to discuss the planning process, issues, options, etc., as required.

The following documents or background materials will guide and support the planning project. A list of background information is included in Appendix A.

- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 1992. *Ontario Provincial Parks: Planning and Management Policies, 1992 Update.*
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 1994. *Ontario Provincial Park Management Planning Manual.*
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 1995. *Environmental Bill of Rights Procedures Manual* (Working Draft). Corporate Policy and Planning Secretariat.
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 2005. *Our Sustainable Future - Ministry of Natural Resources Strategic Directions.* Natural Resources Information Centre, Peterborough.
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 2005. *A Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves.* Ontario Parks, Queen's Printer for Ontario, Peterborough.
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 2005. *Protecting What Sustains Us: Ontario's Biodiversity Strategy.* Queen's Printer for Ontario, Peterborough.

6.0 CONSULTATION

The consultation process will be conducted in an open and transparent manner. During the term of the planning process, First Nations, the public and various interest groups will be provided with:

Stage 1: *an invitation to participate in the planning process, an invitation to inspect the approved terms of reference, and an opportunity to review the background information file (45 days);*
Stage 2: *an opportunity to review the preliminary park management plan (45 days); and*

Stage 3: *upon the approval by the Director of Ontario Parks, the park management plan can be released to the public. Briefing sessions to various groups may take place, however there will be no public consultation at this point.).*

If optional planning steps are necessary (e.g., to deal with complex management options that may emerge as a result of the planning process) additional public consultation opportunities will be provided to address them. The public consultation proposals are outlined in the following sections.

6.1 Stage 1 – Initial Invitation to Participate, Terms of Reference and Background Information File

Following approval of the terms of reference, public notice will be given as follows:

- *pre-consultation with local First Nations' communities;*
- *mailing to First Nations' communities, agencies, interest groups, local politicians (municipal and provincial) and adjacent property owners;*
- *posting of the approved terms of reference on the Ontario Parks' website;*
- *paid advertisement in local newspapers;*
- *posting of an EBR policy proposal notice on the Environmental Registry;*
- *posted notices onsite; and*
- *meetings with stakeholder groups and agencies, as required.*

These notices will outline the proposed planning process, identify the opportunities for public input and solicit public comments.

6.2 Stage 2 – Preliminary Park Management Plan

Following the evaluation and public review of the terms of reference and background information, a preferred approach is developed and draft policies are refined. This package becomes the basis for the preliminary park management plan. This document will meet all content requirements as set out in the *Ontario Provincial Park Management Planning Manual*. The plan will outline a prioritized implementation strategy for their respective elements and summarize any public consultation that has occurred. The preliminary park management plan will stand as a proposed statement of Ontario Parks' preferred policy for the site. Consultation carried out at this stage will consist of the following:

- *pre-consultation with local First Nations' communities;*
- *mailing to First Nations' communities, agencies, interest groups, local politicians (municipal and provincial) and adjacent property owners;*
- *posting of the preliminary park management plan on the Ontario Parks' website;*
- *paid advertisement in local newspapers;*
- *revised posting of an EBR policy proposal notice on the Environmental Registry;*
- *staffed open house;*
- *posted notices onsite; and*
- *meetings with stakeholder groups and agencies, as required.*

The preliminary park management plan will be made available electronically or in hard copy to be circulated to adjacent landowners, agencies, municipalities, interest groups, politicians and

First Nations. Within the preliminary park management plan there will be a summary explanation of the opportunities for public participation and how input was considered.

6.3 Stage 3 – Approved Park Management Plan

The final park management plan will take into consideration public response to the preliminary park management plan. The approved park management plan will meet all content requirements as set out in the *Ontario Provincial Park Management Planning Manual*. The document will contain all policies and directional statements for the management of the protected area. Notification of plan release will be carried out at this stage and will consist of the following:

- *briefing with local First Nations' communities;*
- *mailing to First Nations' communities, agencies, interest groups, local politicians (municipal and provincial) and adjacent property owners;*
- *posting of the approved park management plan on the Ontario Parks' website;*
- *paid advertisement in local newspapers;*
- *posting of an EBR policy decision notice on the Environmental Registry;*
- *posted notices onsite; and*
- *meetings with stakeholder groups and agencies, as required.*

The park management plan will be circulated to those individuals and organizations that directly contributed to the park management planning process. Within the park management plan there will be a summary explanation of the opportunities for public participation and how input was considered.

7.0 PLANNING SCHEDULE SUMMARY

Refer to Appendix B.

8.0 ONTARIO PARKS' STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

In addition to preparing the park management plan and its various components, the planning team will be responsible for direct consultation with First Nations, interest groups, municipalities and the general public. Specific staff responsibilities will be as follows:

- Jeff Lytle, Acting Park Superintendent, Balsam Lake Provincial Park, will chair the planning team and provide ongoing assistance to the project by providing information about current operations, facilities, resource management issues and community concerns, and will serve as a liaison to local First Nations, stakeholders and the public.

- Hank van Luit, Parks Planning Manager, Central Zone, Ontario Parks, will provide specific guidance and advice regarding the Ontario Parks' planning and public consultation process, and will ensure that all EBR, Environmental Assessment Act and Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act and Ontario Parks' policy requirements are fulfilled.

- Meghan Pomeroy, Acting Assistant Park Planner, Central Zone, Ontario Parks, will conduct research and background information collection and prepare public consultation, communications and planning documents.

- Burke Korol, Zone Ecologist, Central Zone, Ontario Parks, will provide input in the areas of natural resource management and ecological monitoring.

- Jay Nichols, Zone Manager, Central Zone, Ontario Parks, will approve final drafts of planning materials.

- Other planning team members and contacts may be assigned various tasks throughout the project.

- District representative, provides input regarding resource management values, activities and policies for areas adjacent to the park.

9.0 BUDGET

Public consultation requirements for Balsam Lake Provincial Park will be combined with those of Indian Point Provincial Park.

Stage 1 – Terms of Reference	
Media Notice in Newspapers	$500
Direct Mailing	$300
Terms of Reference Production (in-house)	$300
Stage 3 – Preliminary Management Plan	
Media Notice in Newspapers	$500
Direct Mailing	$400
Plan Production (in-house)	$300
Open House	$500
Stage 2 – Approved Management Plan	
Media Notice in Newspapers	$500
Plan Production	$800
Direct Mailing of Plan	$500
TOTAL	**$4800**

Whenever possible, email will be used as a means to contact the public to avoid the unnecessary waste of paper.

APPENDIX A

BACKGROUND INFORMATION REFERENCES

Burns, J.A. 1972. *Archaeological Survey of Balsam Lake Provincial Park, Bexley Township, Victoria County, Ontario.* Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

Korol, J. B. 2006. *Balsam Lake Vegetation Stewardship Plan.* A report prepared for the Ontario Parks Central Zone office, Huntsville.

Jalava, J. V. 2007. *Life Science Inventory of Balsam Lake and Indian Point Provincial Parks.* Ontario Parks, Central Zone, Huntsville, Ontario.

MacDonald, Ian D. 1982. *A Reconnaissance Biological Inventory of Balsam Lake Provincial Park.* Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

NHIC (Natural Heritage Information Centre). 2005. *Element Occurrence and Natural Areas.* Natural Heritage Information Centre, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Peterborough, ON. Electronic databases.

Ontario Ministry of the Environment. 1971. *The Ontario Water Resources Commission Report on Water Quality in Balsam Lake.*

OMNR. 1980. *Balsam Lake Provincial Park Preliminary Master Plan.* Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

OMNR. 1984. *Balsam Lake Provincial Park Management Plan – Background Information Document.* Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

OMNR. 1985. *Balsam Lake Provincial Park Management Plan.* Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

Ontario Parks. 2007. *Park Statistics 2006.* Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

Parks Canada. 2007. *Trent Severn National Historic Site of Canada.* On-line document. URL: http://www.pc.gc.ca/lhn-nhs/on/trentsevern/index_e.asp.

APPENDIX B
Balsam Lake Park Management Planning Schedule Summary

STAGE IN PLANNING PROCESS	DESCRIPTION	PRODUCT(S)	CONSULTATION/ COMMUNICATIONS	PROPOSED TIMETABLE
1a. Preparation of Invitation to Participate and Approved Terms of Reference	• Identify scope of the planning program • Schedule • Costs • Responsibilities • Public consultation	• Terms of reference	• First Nations pre-consultation • Circulation of the approved terms of reference • Electronic posting of the approved terms of reference and Background Information list • Paid advertisements inserted in local newspapers • EBR policy proposal notice posting on the Environmental Registry • Posted notice onsite • Meetings with stakeholder groups, as required	*Fall 2008*
1b. Background Information	• Gathering and general review of background information	• Background information file		
2. Preliminary Park Management Plan	• Content requirements defined by *Ontario Provincial Park Management Planning Manual*	• Preliminary park management plan	• First Nations pre-consultation • Circulation of preliminary park management plan • Electronic posting of preliminary park management plan • Paid advertisements inserted in local newspapers • Staffed open house • EBR policy proposal notice update on the Environmental Registry • Posted notice onsite • Meetings with stakeholder groups, as required	*Winter 2009*
3. Approved Park Management Plan	• Content requirements defined by *Ontario Provincial Park Management Planning Manual*	• Approved park management plan	• First Nations pre-consultation • Circulation of the approved park management plan • Electronic posting of the approved park management plan • Paid advertisements inserted in local newspapers • EBR policy decision notice posted on the Environmental Registry • Posted notice onsite • Meetings with stakeholder groups, as required	*Summer 2009*